

Precision Transmission

Expanding

Community Affairs File

✓ Business + Industry (wv)

Ts MAY 1 1986

Precision Transmission continues to do its thing in a precise way

By Jan Chait
Tribune-Star Staff Reporter

Local Precision Transmission owner William R. Aubin is expanding his horizons and, as his company name indicates, he's doing it in a very precise way.

"The company, in the environment of Terre Haute, has found it capable of expanding," Aubin said.

So, when the national chain decided to sell franchises in Illinois, he bought a 32-county area, saying, "I'm developing my own little mini-chain based out of here."

Aubin said he could have left Terre Haute when he "did this Illinois thing," but decided to stay right at home at 1600 Wabash Ave.

"Terre Haute's given me a good living, and . . . I think there's a certain payback. My home office will be in Terre Haute and this will be the training center and distribution centerpoint for all of those stores."

Although there is a possibility that only two jobs will be added locally, the city will benefit in other ways by having people in to go through one-month training courses.

As an area licensee, Aubin will open and sell franchises for Precision Transmission sites in Peoria, Springfield, Bloomington-Normal, Decatur, Champaign-Urbana and Danville, Ill.



Reporting in

Robert McLin, Precision Transmission service manager Bob Mullis and Kevin Hixon, seated, and Guchi Jaurre and Bill Aubin, standing, discuss a marketing study the ISU students did

for Aubin's business. "As long as students are getting this sort of a chance . . . I think that's what education is all about," Jaurre said of the experience.

Tribune-Star/Jan Chait

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"The person who purchases the franchise has the strength of the national chain plus the expertise and hands-on experience of the area licensee. The guy who buys a franchise probably sinks his life's savings into it and I can't let him go through a learning curve. I've got 10 years of learning curve and I'm gonna be in the guy's hip pocket."

Aubin's franchisors will also have the benefit of an extensive market study that he commissioned to determine where to best locate the new sites.

The 400-page study measures the market potential of each of the cities by studying such factors as the number of households, average income, population profiles, competitive studies and number of vehicle registrations to determine the number of potential customers.

"They did an excellent job of determining which counties we should purchase from the national chain," Aubin said of those who did the report. "It was working with these people that enabled me to expand."

"These people" are not what you might expect. Aubin didn't go to some slick, Madison Avenue marketing firm; he searched about in his own back yard and found Guchi Jaurre, Kevin Hixon, Robert McLin and Suhana Abu Malek —

all students at Indiana State University.

He found them by going through ISU's Center for Research and Management Services. Jaurre, Hixon, McLin, Malek and other students form the Small Business Institute, which is part of the Small Business Administration's Management Assistance Program.

William Minnis, who directs both CRAMS and the SBI, said the students who work through the latter organization "have to have good academic records, senior status, and be willing to spend a lot of time in a non-structured class dealing with real lives and real business people."

The goals of the by-invitation-only class is to help students acquire real-life business-consulting experience, to assist Terre Haute area businesses and to open the doors of the university services to the business community.

"We've served 10 different businesses in the last year," Minnis said. "All the services are confidential and require a strong working relationship between the students and the business owner."

"With Mr. Aubin, it allowed the students to get a lot more out of the experience and, at the same time, allowed him to get a lot more from

the students. It's not a work situation; it's a consulting experience."

Aubin has nothing but praise for the neophyte consultants. "I was impressed with the amount of knowledge, dedication and enthusiasm."

But that was after he got to know them. Aubin admitted that, at first, he was "scared to death" about turning confidential information about his company over to a group of students.

"That was a little difficult," he said. "There was a certain amount of trepidation involved in giving them that information."

The end result, however, was a well-researched report which, after it is put into final form by the Wabash Consulting Group Inc., will be helpful to anyone who wants to open a franchise in Aubin's area.

Aubin was a student at Indiana University-Kokomo in 1976, when a professor mentioned that Precision Transmission had a franchise available here. "He and I became partners and bought the franchise in Terre Haute. Three years later, I bought him out."

He describes the business as a small manufacturing facility as

well as being an installation point for a finished product.

With the fast changes in technology inherent in today's society, Aubin said, he and his employees are constantly having to retrain just to keep up. "That's one reason we don't do shocks, brakes and everything else; we've got enough to do to keep up with transmissions."

That, plus his multi-faceted role as the owner of a small business, makes those services available in the community even more important, he said.

"The small business man has a certain plight in that he has so many roles to fill that his free time is limited. I feel that, if he can tap into the resources available, such as those at CRAMS, to help manage his business, it allows him to come back to his business refreshed and ready to work again," Aubin said.

"When I first got into business, there were a lot of services available to me in the community. I could have expanded a lot sooner if I'd known about them. I think businesses in the Terre Haute area should tap into the four institutions of higher learning, for God's sake."

Preferred Home Health Care

Business + Industry (ul)

Preferred Home Health plans open-house ceremony Thursday

Ts OCT 13 1988
Preferred Home Health Care Inc.
at 601 Hospital Lane will have its
grand opening from 2:30 to 6 p.m.
Thursday in the private dining
room of Terre Haute Regional
Hospital.

Its services are available to
patients who need hospital-type
services but choose to have their
needs provided for at home.

Co-owners Jackie Steuerwald,
administrator, and Jackie Bol-
inger, director of clinical services,
are registered nurses, hold
bachelor's degrees in nursing and
have 17 years of home health

experience between them.

Services range from live-in com-
panions to RNs providing care to
those on life-support systems such
as respirators.

The needs of the individual
determine the services assigned,
whether it be assistance with a
bath, provided by a home health
aide; rehabilitation of a stroke
patient by a physical and/or speech
therapist; or a new diabetic in need
of teaching by a registered nurse.

The agency is Medicare-ap-
proved and also accepts third-party
payors and private-pay clients.

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Preston pride

Staff cooperation makes work conditions among best

Business and Industry (w)

By Kelly Porter
Tribune-Star Staff Reporter

AUG 02 1987

The few.
The proud.

The employees of Preston Trucking Company of 4900 N. 13th St.

Why are they so proud? Only because they work for one of the 10 best places to work in America as revealed in a recent edition of USA Today.

While Preston Trucking of Terre Haute is only a small part of Preston Corp. — based in Preston, Md. — its services span a 10,000-square-mile area providing shipping to just about anywhere you can think of.

"We carry just about anything and everything," terminal manager Randy Willhite says. "We're a less-than-a-truckload carrier — if you can box it, we'll transport it."

Founded in 1932 by A.T. Blades, Preston Corp. has 4,700 associates in a 20-state area with about 9,000 pieces of equipment.

Locally, Preston employees nine drivers and four managerial and office workers.

But why is Preston such a good place to work?

The valley's business

Willhite believes it's because of the management-employee working relationship — a relationship that's the only one of its kind in the trucking industry.

"The relationship we strive for here isn't confrontational and harsh like many people believe the trucking industry usually is," he said. "Preston management concentrates on the positive rather than the negative — we call it an open door policy."

Willhite said any worker at any time can approach a management person and ask any kind of question they want about the company.

"If they want to know how much money we made last month, last week or last year, they can pull the information up on the computer and see for themselves," he said. "Not many companies anywhere in the U.S. do that for their employees."

Preston also implements what the company calls the Scanlon Bonus Program.

It entails meetings between management personnel and laborers each month, and during the meetings the two sides try and develop ideas to improve

operations and make more money.

If they come up with a good idea, Preston rewards its employees with a bonus at the end of the month.

"It's the only program of its kind in the industry," Willhite said. "The reason we do it is because we figure no one but the guy who's doing the job knows what's best, what will improve operations."

Willhite said input from workers doesn't stop at the local level. It climbs on up the corporate ladder to the vice presidents and president of the company.

Although being on the top-10 list is quite an ego booster for some, Willhite says the work the job entails isn't glamorous like many other top-10 companies.

"Right now a lot of people are on vacation so some drivers are working a lot more hours — about 11 or 12 a day," he said. "It's not easy. It's strenuous and tough, but they're well rewarded for what they do — they make \$14.81 and hour base salary."

Last year, Preston Trucking of Terre

Haute reported a gross revenue of \$1.6 million for a profit of \$108,000.

"That doesn't sound like much, but for such a small terminal it's pretty good, and it's all because of the people we have working here — working together," Willhite said.

Despite the hard work and long hours, Willhite believes employees like what they do and like the pay.

"It's not like a boring office job where you're confined to one single cubicle for eight hours a day," he said. "They get to go out and meet different people day after day. The only drawback is the hot weather — the trucks aren't air conditioned."

Preston was joined in the top 10 by Delta Airlines Inc., Federal Express Corp., Hallmark Cards Inc., IBM Corp., Northwest Mutual Life Insurance Company, Pitney Bowes Inc., Publix Super Markets, Herman Miller Inc. and Hewlett-Packard Company.

Being in the ranks with such prestigious others doesn't intimidate Willhite, however.

"Being named along with the others is a direct result of all our associates working together to provide superior service to our customers and using our innovative thinking," he said. "All to be the best we can be."

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Progress Building Corp

✓ Business + Industry (WB)

Building owner leader in growth

TS AUG 02 1986

The company that will own the new IBM building at Seventh and Wabash Avenue was among the city's earliest organizers of economic development.

Progress Building Corp. was formed in 1948 and was instrumental in the decision of Reuben H. Donnelley Corp. to build in Terre Haute.

Progress bought the building at 22 N. Fifth St., where IBM is now housed, remodeled it and leased it to Donnelley, said John S. Newlin, vice president of Newlin-Johnson Co. Inc., which manages the real-estate activities of Progress.

The building at 22 N. Fifth originally housed a Ford Motor Co. agency and garage.

In 1966, Progress built a new building for Donnelley at 666 S. First St.

IBM in 1970 leased its present site from Progress.

Newlin said that in recent years IBM management decided it needed a new facility. Progress worked with Newlin-Johnson and Shelton Hannig Co. to plan the new building.

Newlin, who handled lease arrangements, said the land where the new building will be con-

structed was bought Sept. 24 by Progress from Bruce F. Sherman.

Other properties owned by Progress include apartments, a medical building and a retail store. John T. Newlin, Newlin's father, is president of Progress.

Original directors of Progress included Robert Nitsche, Morris Blumberg, D.C. Johnson, Herbert Mace and John Biel. The original shareholders were Mace, Newlin-Johnson Co., Terre Haute Chamber of Commerce, Meis Bros. Co., Blumberg, Silverstein Bros., Ralph Yeager, L.E. Light and Biel.

— Patrick J. Barnes

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Protective Coatings Inc.

Business and Industry

Company, union officials argue about fire cause

FEB 02 1988

FORT WAYNE, Ind. (AP) — Company and union officials are blaming each other for a fire that destroyed Protective Coatings Inc., which has been closed for three months due to a strike.

Company President Fred Haines said he believes the fire was set by members of Allied Industrial Workers Local 506, who have been on strike since September.

Damage to the building is estimated at \$500,000 to \$1 million, while damage to the contents is about \$100,000, Haines said. The contents are insured, he said.

But Dee A. Jones, president of Local 506, said the fire most likely was set by Protective Coatings because the company had lost interest in its rubber lining division.

"If anyone has a reason to burn it down, it's them," Jones said. "They're out of their lease and they're out of a division that they didn't want to be in."

The building was one of two Protective Coatings plants and was used to make rubber linings for rail cars that carry chemicals.

Fire officials said they do not know what caused the fire, which began about 11 p.m. Thursday. But Haines had his own opinion.

"It's our feeling that it is arson," said Haines, who said fire officials told him they also believe arson is likely.

"One week ago the shanty the strikers use burned down, and the president of the union said that was done by the company," Haines said. "We know of no possibility of that, but the burning of the Round House (plant) could be retaliation."

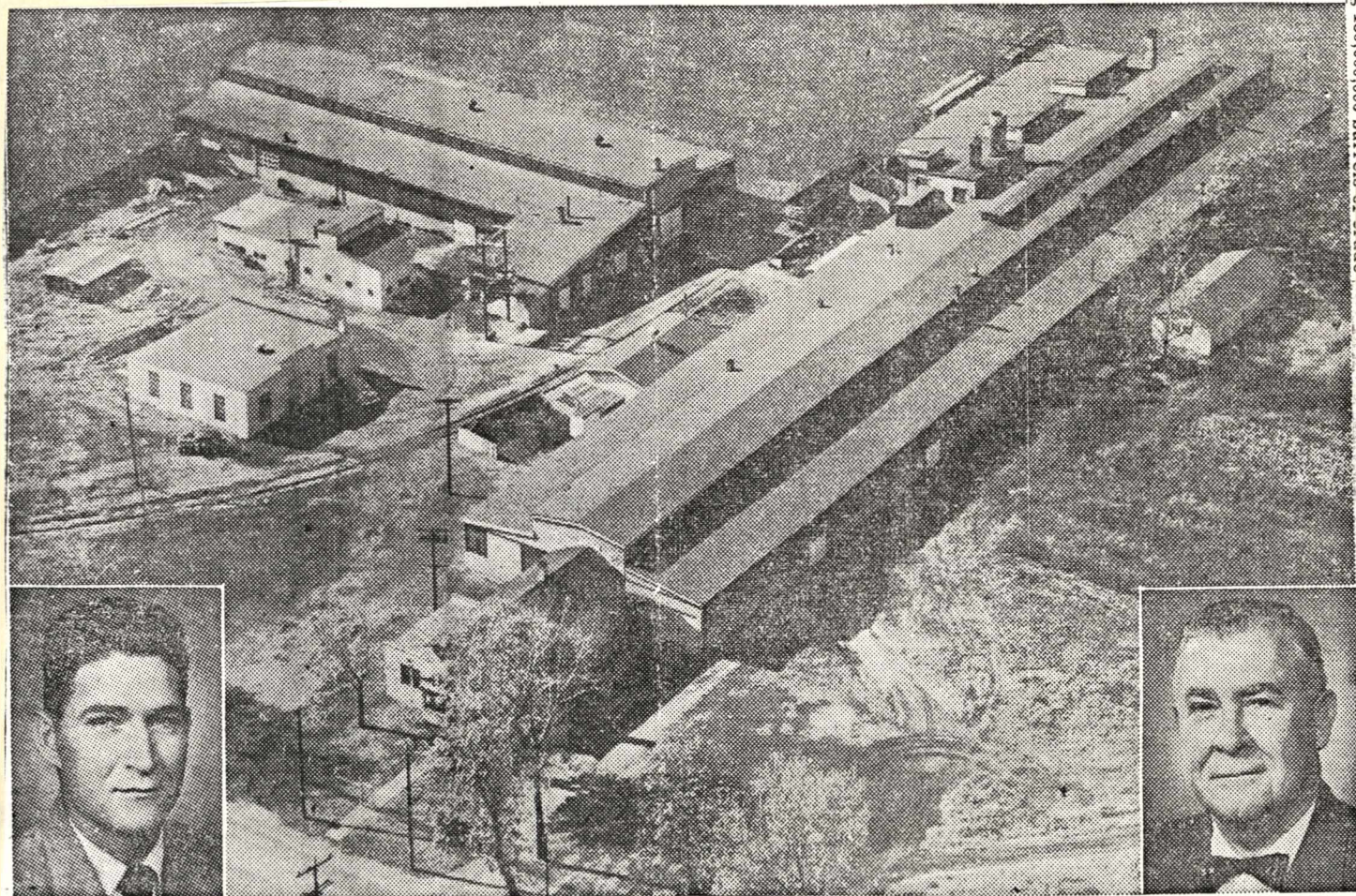
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Prox, Frank Co.

Terre Haute Industrial Series No. 22 NOV 21 1954



PLANT OF FRANK PROX COMPANY, INC., located at 1201 South First street, where equipment used in the mining industry is manufactured. Inset at left is Robert F. Prox, Jr., secretary-treasurer of the firm, and at right is Robert F. Prox, Sr., president.

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Community Affairs File

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TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA

Frank Prox Company, Manufacturers of Mining Equipment And Heating Boilers, One of Terre Haute's Pioneer Industries

FRANK PROX, the founder of the Frank Prox Company, Inc., 1201 South First street, was a coppersmith in his native province of Hannover, Germany. He came to this country in the fall of 1866, locating in Cincinnati, Ohio, where he was employed by a large company on distillery copper work. He married Agnes Mid-

dendorf of Cincinnati, Ohio, on Oct. 6, 1868. In 1869 he and his wife came to Terre Haute where he took a position as superintendent of the McGregor Distillery as head coppersmith and continued in that position until the latter part of 1874.

In January, 1875, he went into business for himself at 677 Wa-

bash avenue, engaging in gas fitting, plumbing and coppersmith work. In a very short time, he had a successful business established and added steam and hot water heating for residence to his other lines. He invented a new wrought iron pipe and cast iron radiator for that purpose and they were used on many large installa-

tions, at St. Mary-of-the-Woods, Union Station, old Terre Haute House, Rose Dispensary, Wiley High School, Rose Orphan Home and many others. The demand for this radiator necessitated larger quarters, so he purchased land and erected a suitable building for

Continued On Page 10, Column 1.

the business, with living quarters above, for his family at 17 and 19 North Ninth street. A very short time later, he purchased three adjoining lots and erected a foundry, to make the castings for his radiators and for a cast iron sectional heating boiler that he had designed and patented.

In 1890 he wanted still larger quarters, and with John F. Brinkman and W. R. McKeen, purchased the Phoenix Foundry and Machine Company which occupied the entire block, Mulberry to Eagle streets, on the east side of Ninth street. This was operated as the Prox and Brinkman Manufacturing Company. A large three-story building was erected on the corner of Ninth and Mulberry streets for plumbing and heating and mill supply business, which furnished products to plants and heating contractors within a radius of 50 miles of Terre Haute. This department was sold to Crane Company in 1908.

The machine shop and foundry was utilized for manufacture of cast iron sectional heating boilers, jobbing castings for store fronts, powder mills, coal mines, steam hoisting engines and fan engines for coal mines. Also mine cars, hoisting cages and tippie equipment were manufactured until about 1935, when coal mines in this territory were closing down and manufacture ceased due to freight rates in other territory.

In 1905, the name of the firm was changed to the Frank Prox Company, Inc.

In 1911, still larger quarters were needed and the present modern concrete and glass plant was

erected at 1201 South First street, operations starting there on Nov. 11, 1911.

Frank Prox died Feb. 14, 1921. Herman C. Prox succeeded to the presidency; Jacob E. Schoemehl, secretary and treasurer. Feb. 19, 1921, Robert F. Prox, grandson of the founder, was made a stockholder and director and elected to office of vice president.

Herman C. Prox, president, died April 11, 1936, and Robert F. Prox was elected president.

In 1949, Jacob E. Schoemehl, secretary and treasurer, retired after 57 years' service, and Robert F. Prox, Jr., who had just graduated from Indiana University in business administration, was elected to the office of secretary and treasurer.

Of the principal products now manufactured, the cutting chains, bits, bars and sprockets for electric cutting machines has become the major part of the business. These products are sold in all the major coal fields in the United States and also have been successfully used in the mining of potash, salt and tronite.

The other principal product is cast iron, low pressure, sectional heating boilers for steam and water. These boilers are designed for efficient use with gas, oil, stoker or hand coal operation. These boilers have been successfully installed in large buildings such as schools, churches and apartments. Smaller sizes are also made for residences and other smaller installations.

The foundry also engages in jobbing work. This consists mainly of large castings for local industry.